REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-9, and 12-13 are currently pending. Claims 1-3, 5, and 12-13 have been amended; and Claims 4, 10-11, and 14-15 have been canceled without prejudice by the present amendment. No new matter has been added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 11 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 4 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Shoda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,149,350 B2); Claims 1-3, 5, 10-12, and 14-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Shoda in view of Hozumi (U.S. Patent No. 5,621,819); and Claims 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Shoda in view of Hozumi and further in view of Kirani et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,103,357 B2).

First, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Bekele and Primary Examiner LaRose for the courtesy of a personal interview granted to Applicants' representatives on July 16, 2008, during which the outstanding issues in the present application were discussed. During the interview, Claims 1, 5, and 12 were discussed, and the Examiners indicated that the outstanding rejections of Claims 1, 5, and 12 appear to be overcome. Suggestions discussed during the interview are incorporated in the present amendment.

Applicants note that the Kirani reference is not correctly identified, and submit that Kirani is assumed to be U.S. Patent No. 7,103,357 B2. If this assumption is not correct, Applicants respectfully request that record be corrected in the next office communication.

Claim 5 has been amended into independent form, incorporating all features of original Claim 4. Claims 1-3 and 12 have been amended to address matters of form only. Claim 13 has been amended to depend from Claim 12, rendering the 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

rejection of Claim 13 moot. Claims 4, 10-11, and 14-15 have been canceled, rendering the rejections of these claims moot. Thus, no new matter has been added.

Applicants traverse the rejections of Claims 1, 5, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus configured to reproduce pixels representative of a color image from groups of color component signal samples representing the image, each of the groups representing two of the pixels and including two input luminance values, one for each pixel, and first and second input chrominance values. The first and second chrominance values are formed by averaging first and second chrominance values for each pixel. The image processing apparatus includes a de-compressing processor configured to receive the groups of color component signal samples and to generate reproduced pixels, each comprising three color component values. The image processing apparatus further includes a detail detection processor configured to detect whether one of the first and second pixels is representative of substantially white or substantially black and the other of the pixels is not representative of substantially white or substantially black. If this condition is met, the detail detection processor arranges for the de-compressing processor to assign to first and second chrominance values for one of the first and second pixels representing substantially white or black the value of zero, and ***to assign to first and second chrominance values for the other of said first and second pixels, not representing substantially white or black, twice the value of the first and second input chrominance values respectively***, and to reproduce the three color components of each pixel from the corresponding input luminance value and the assigned first and second chrominance values. Otherwise, the de-compressing processor reproduces the three color components of each pixel from the corresponding input luminance value in combination with the first and second input chrominance values.

Claims 5 and 12 recite similar features of assigning to first and second chrominance values for the other of said first and second pixels, not representing substantially white or black, twice the value of the first and second input chrominance values respectively.

As discussed during the interview, Applicants respectfully submit that neither Shoda nor Hozumi describe any features analogous to the detail detection processor recited in Claims 1, 5, and 12. Specifically, Shoda describes the averaging of chrominance values across a block of eight by eight pixels, which is not applicable to the two pixel group recited in Claims 1, 5, and 12. Further, the outstanding Office Action acknowledges that Shoda fails to teach a detail detection processor as recited in Claims 1, 5, and 12, but asserts that Hozumi teaches this feature in columns 22 and 23. Applicants respectfully submit that Hozumi describes re-using chrominance values of adjacent pixels if the adjacent pixels are judged to differ by some predetermined threshold amount. However, Hozumi is silent regarding ***assigning to first and second chrominance values for the other of said first and second pixels, not representing substantially white or black, twice the value of the first and second input chrominance values respectively***, as recited in Claims 1, 5, and 12. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that no matter how Shoda and Hozumi may properly be combined, the combination fails to teach or suggest all of the features recited in Claims 1, 5, and 12.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 5, and 12 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably define over any proper combination of the cited references, and request that the rejections of Claims 1-3, 5, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejections of Claims 6-9, Applicants respectfully submit, and indeed the outstanding Office Action does not assert otherwise, that Kirani fails to cure the deficiencies of the combination of Shoda and Hozumi discussed above. Accordingly,

Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claims 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

As Applicants have not substantively amended Claim 1 in response to any rejection of record, should a further rejection of Claim 1 be applied in the next Action based upon newly cited prior art, Applicants submit that such an action **cannot properly be considered a Final Office Action.**

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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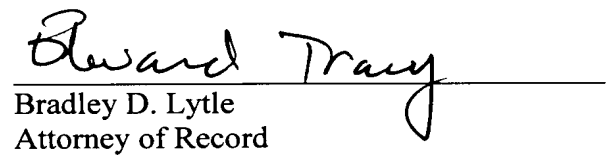

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